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GEAR UP WEST CONFERENCE AIMS AT HELPING STUDENTS GO ON TO COLLEGE

(BOISE) -- Approximately 450 educators will gather at the Boise Center on the Grove October 18-20 to attend the 9th Annual GEAR UP West conference.

The conference, hosted by the State Department of Education, will feature three days of seminars on how to help inspire students to go on to college, how to help them over the financial hurdles of launching a college education, and how to give them the best chance to succeed once they get to college.

Workshops will cover a range of subjects from how to help students with their national student loan applications to rural school success stories such as those at Sugar-Salem High School.

The conference's Welcome Dinner will be held on Sunday October 18th at 5:30 p.m. and will feature as its keynote speaker Rep. Ryan Kerby (R-Dist. 9A), who served 21 years as the superintendent of the Plymouth School District and is a member of the House Education Committee.

A Sunday pre-conference session beginning at 1:00 p.m. will focus on developing a comprehensive financial aid application program for students and their parents.

Ranjit Sidhu, president and CEO of the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, will keynote the networking breakfast at 7:30 a.m. Monday.

Shane Feldman, the founder and CEO of Count Me In, the largest youth-led organization in North America will be the keynote speaker at Monday's noon luncheon.

On Tuesday, the networking breakfast at 7:30 a.m. will feature Dr. Mark David Milliron, co-founder and chief learning officer of Civitas Learning.

The keynote speaker for Tuesday's 12:30 p.m. luncheon will be Josh Richie, the Career Counselor at Borah High School.

Idaho and seven other western states -- Arizona, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Wyoming, Utah and Washington -- are involved in the GEAR UP West program.

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